



The Commission was created in 1987 by a constitutional amendment from the people to take politics out of the salary setting process.

We are charged with setting the salaries of the elected officials in the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches of government:

- ✓ Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Auditor, Attorney General, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Commissioner of Public Lands, and Insurance Commissioner.
- ✓ Members of the Legislature
- ✓ Justices of the Supreme Court and judges of the Court of Appeals, Superior courts, and District courts.

Our statutory policy and citizen mandate is to:

Base the elected officials' salaries on realistic standards in order to pay them according to the duties of their office and to attract citizens of the highest quality to public service. We are directed to study the relationship of salaries to duties and to set an appropriate salary for each position. We cannot evaluate performance; that is left to the voters.

The law clearly sets out how and when we must conduct the business of setting the elected officials' salaries. This work must be conducted in each odd-numbered year.

- ✓ The first step of the process is to adopt a "proposed salary schedule". This is done at our January meeting.
- ✓ We must then hold no fewer than four public meetings to take testimony and comments on the proposal. This takes place from January through May. (Like all other state agencies, our funding for the 2009-2011 biennium was reduced. The reduction included the elimination of two public

hearings in 2011. This means that instead of holding five public hearings in 2011, we will only hold three.)

- ✓ A final two-year salary schedule is adopted at our last public meeting in May.
- ✓ The salary schedule must be filed with the Secretary of State not later than the first Monday in June.
- ✓ The schedule takes effect 90 days later unless a citizen referendum is filed to overturn it.
- ✓ After the 90 day period has elapsed, the salary schedule becomes state law and cannot be overturned or modified by this or any other body.

In setting the elected officials' salaries, we may:

- ✓ Grant increases to individual positions, to a specific group such as the Judiciary, or to all positions within our jurisdiction.
- ✓ Grant across-the-board General Wage Adjustments (GWA).
- ✓ Make no change; keep salaries at current level.

The Constitution forbids us from decreasing the salary of any elected official during his/her term of office.

For more information about us, visit our web site at

www.salaries.wa.gov

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We welcome your participation in setting the elected officials' salaries.